

What is claimed is:

1. A system for use with a search engine to rank search results, comprising:
 - 2 an off-line ranking system for receiving rating data compiled from an off-line source
 - 3 based on interactive criteria, and for indexing the rating data;
 - 4 a ranking repository for storing the rating data indexed by the off-line ranking
 - 5 system; and
 - 6 a result sorter for sorting query results generated by the search engine, based on
 - 7 the rating data from the ranking repository, and for generating ranked matches.

1. 2. The system according to claim 1, further including a search results transformer
2 that converts the ranked matches to a user browsable form.

1. 3. The system according to claim 2, further including an indexing engine that
2 indexes web documents to generate indexed data.

1. 4. The system according to claim 3, further including a metadata repository for
2 storing web documents that have been downloaded off-line.

1. 5. The system according to claim 3, further including a query transformer which,
2 when prompted by a query, applies a query request to the indexed data and generates
3 the query results.

1 6. The system according to claim 1, further including an on-line ranking system for
2 receiving rating data compiled from an on-line source based on interactive criteria, and
3 for indexing on-line rating data.

1 7. The system according to claim 1, wherein the off-line source includes any one or
2 more of a questionnaire, a survey, a non-web based rating service, or a web based
3 rating service.

1 8. The system according to claim 1, wherein the interactive criteria assess the
2 quality of a business in terms of any one or more of: customer satisfaction,
3 professionalism, cost, and ease of use of a product or service.

1 9. A computer program product for use with a search engine to rank search results,
2 comprising:
3 an off-line ranking system for receiving rating data compiled from an off-line source
4 based on interactive criteria, and for indexing the rating data;
5 a ranking repository for storing the rating data indexed by the off-line ranking
6 system; and
7 a result sorter for sorting query results generated by the search engine, based on
8 the rating data from the ranking repository, and for generating ranked matches.

1 10. The computer program product according to claim 9, further including a search
2 results transformer that converts the ranked matches to a user browsable form.

1 11. The computer program product according to claim 10, further including an
2 indexing engine that indexes web documents to generate indexed data.

1 12. The computer program product according to claim 11, further including a
2 metadata repository for storing web documents that have been downloaded off-line.

1 13. The computer program product according to claim 11, further including a query
2 transformer which, when prompted by a query, applies a query request to the indexed
3 data and generates the query results.

1 14. The computer program product according to claim 9, further including an on-line
2 ranking system for receiving rating data compiled from an on-line source based on
3 interactive criteria, and for indexing on-line rating data.

1 15. The computer program product according to claim 9, wherein the off-line source
2 includes any one or more of a questionnaire, a survey, or a web based rating service.

1 16. The computer program product according to claim 9, wherein the interactive
2 criteria assess the quality of a business in terms of any one or more of: customer
3 satisfaction, professionalism, cost, and ease of use of a product or service.

1 17. A method for use with a search engine to rank search results, comprising:
2 receiving rating data compiled from an off-line source based on interactive criteria,
3 and indexing the rating data by means of an off-line ranking system;
4 storing the rating data indexed by the off-line ranking system, in a ranking repository;
5 and
6 sorting query results generated by the search engine, based on the rating data from
7 the ranking repository, and for generating ranked matches.

1 18. The method according to claim 17, further including transforming the ranked
2 matches into a user browsable form.

1 19. The method according to claim 18, further including indexing web documents to
2 generate indexed data.

1 20. The method according to claim 19, further including storing web documents that
2 have been downloaded off-line.

1 21. The method according to claim 19, further including applying a query request to
2 the indexed data for generating the query results.

1 22. The method according to claim 17, wherein receiving rating data includes
2 compiling rating data from an on-line ranking system based on interactive criteria, and
3 indexing the on-line rating data.

1 23. The method according to claim 17, wherein receiving rating data includes
2 compiling rating data from any one or more of a questionnaire, a survey, or a web
3 based rating service.

1 24. The method according to claim 17, further including compiling rating data based
2 on interactive criteria that assess the quality of a business in terms of any one or more
3 of: customer satisfaction, professionalism, cost, and ease of use of a product or service.

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